

I CLAIM:

1. A surgical needle comprising:

an outer tube;

an inner member slidingly fit within the outer tube; and

5 a lock mounted on the outer tube, wherein the lock selectively limits movement of the inner member relative to the outer tube in response to a squeezing or releasing of the lock.

2. The needle according to claim 1, wherein:

10 the lock includes an arm biased outwardly relative to the inner member;

the arm includes at least one finger extending inwardly toward the inner member;

and

15 the finger has a hole oversized relative to the inner member and through which the inner member extends, so that frictional forces may be exerted between the inner member and the finger when the arm is allowed to move outwardly to an unsqueezed position, and so that the frictional forces may be released by squeezing the arm toward the inner member.

3. The needle of claim 2, wherein the hole and finger are sized such that

20 limited or no contact occurs between the finger and the inner member when the arm is squeezed toward the inner member.

4. The needle of claim 2, wherein the hole and finger are sized such that frictional contact with the inner member occurs when the arms are squeezed toward one another to a fully squeezed position, so that the inner member may be locked in both the unsqueezed position and the fully squeezed position of the arms.

5. The needle of claim 2, wherein the hole includes a surface that is approximately V-shaped.

6. A lock operatively connected to a hollow needle for holding a slidable inner member relative to the hollow needle, comprising a pair of opposing locking surfaces forced by a spring toward an inner member held within the hollow needle.

7. The lock of claim 6, wherein the spring is formed from outwardly extending resilient arms.

8. The lock of claim 7, wherein the locking surfaces are on fingers extending inwardly from the arms.

9. The lock of claim 8, wherein the locking surfaces are formed as part of holes on the fingers.

10. The lock of claim 9, wherein the holes and fingers are sized such that limited or no contact occurs between the locking surfaces and an inner member held within the tube, when the arms are squeezed toward one another to a fully squeezed position.

11. The lock of claim 9, wherein the holes and fingers are sized such that frictional contact with an inner member held within the tube occurs when the arms are squeezed toward one another to a fully squeezed position, so that an inner member may be locked in both the unsqueezed position and the fully squeezed position of the arms.

12. The lock of claim 8, wherein the locking surfaces are approximately V-shaped.

13. The lock of claim 8, further comprising a tab formed on at least one of the fingers, and wherein the tab interlocks with a hole on an opposing finger to hold the arms in a partially closed position.

14. The lock of claim 8, wherein the arms are outwardly biased.

15. The lock of claim 7, wherein the locking surfaces are approximately V-shaped.

16. The lock of claim 7, wherein the arms are outwardly biased.

17. The lock of claim 6, wherein the locking surfaces are approximately V-shaped.

18. A surgical tool for depositing material within living tissue, comprising:  
a delivery tube for penetrating living tissue and delivering material to within living tissue;  
an inner member held within the delivery tube to push material through the tube;  
and  
a releasable lock operatively connected to the tube to selectively limit movement of the inner member relative to the tube.

19. The surgical tool of claim 18, wherein the lock includes outwardly biased arms.

20. The surgical tool of claim 19, wherein the lock includes locking surfaces formed on fingers extending inwardly from the arms.

21. The surgical tool of claim 20, wherein the locking surfaces are formed as part of holes on the fingers.

5 22. The surgical tool of claim 21, wherein the holes and fingers are sized such that limited or no contact occurs between the locking surfaces and the inner member, when the arms are squeezed toward one another to a fully squeezed position.

23. The surgical tool of claim 21, wherein the holes and fingers are sized such  
10 that frictional contact with the inner member occurs when the arms are squeezed toward one another to a fully squeezed position, so that the inner member may be locked in both the unsqueezed position and the fully squeezed position of the arms.

24. The surgical tool of claim 20, wherein the locking surfaces are  
15 approximately V-shaped.

25. The surgical tool of claim 20, further comprising a tab formed on at least one of the fingers, and wherein the tab interlocks with a hole on an opposing finger to hold the arms in a partially closed position.

26. The surgical tool of claim 18, wherein the lock includes a spring for holding the lock in a biased, locking position.

27. A maneuverable needle for insertion into living tissue comprising:

5 a delivery tube having a unidirectionally tapered point and a long axis extending along the tube;

a grip joined to the tube for rotating the tube about the long axis; and

a visual indicator formed on the grip to provide a visual indication of the orientation of the point relative to the grip.

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